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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XD532

Atlantic Highly Migratory Species; Advisory Panel for Atlantic Highly Migratory Species Southeast Data, Assessment, and Review Workshops

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Notice; nominations for Advisory Panel, updated Terms of Reference for SEDAR Pool.

SUMMARY: NMFS solicits nominations for the Advisory Panel (AP) for Atlantic Highly Migratory Species (HMS) Southeast Data, Assessment, and Review (SEDAR) Workshops (this AP is also called the "SEDAR Pool"). We also notify the public of updates to the Terms of Reference for the SEDAR Pool, including changes to the length of time selectees may serve. The SEDAR Pool is comprised of a group of individuals whom may be selected to consider data and advise NMFS regarding the scientific information, including but not limited to data and models, used in stock assessments for oceanic sharks in the Atlantic Ocean, Gulf of Mexico, and Caribbean Sea. Nominations are being sought for a 5-year

appointment (2015-2020). Individuals with definable interests in the recreational and commercial fishing and related industries, environmental community, academia, and non-governmental organizations will be considered for membership on the SEDAR Pool.

DATES: Nominations must be received on or before [insert date 30 days after date of publication in the FEDERAL REGISTER].

ADDRESSES: You may submit nominations and request the SEDAR Pool Statement of Organization, Practices, and Procedures by any of the following methods:

- Email: SEDAR.pool@noaa.gov.
- Mail: Karyl Brewster-Geisz, Highly Migratory Species Management Division, NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910. Include on the envelope the following identifier: "SEDAR Pool Nomination."
- Fax: 301-713-1917.

Additional information on SEDAR and the SEDAR guidelines can be found at <http://www.sefsc.noaa.gov/sedar/>. The terms of reference for the SEDAR Pool, along with a list of current members, can be found at

<http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/SEDAR/SEDAR.htm>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Delisse Ortiz or Karyl

Brewster-Geisz, (301) 425-8503.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Introduction

Section 302(g)(2) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act), 16 U.S.C. 1801 et seq., states that each Council shall establish such advisory panels as are necessary or appropriate to assist it in carrying out its functions under the Act. For the purposes of this section, NMFS applies the above Council provision to the HMS Management Division (See Section 303(g)(1) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act, which provides that the Secretary will prepare fishery management plans for HMS and consult with Advisory Panels under section 302(g) for such FMPs). As such, NMFS has established the SEDAR Pool under this section. The SEDAR Pool currently consists of 33 individuals who can be selected to review data and advise NMFS regarding the scientific information, including but not limited to data and models, used in stock assessments for oceanic sharks in the Atlantic Ocean, Gulf of Mexico, and Caribbean Sea. While the SEDAR Pool was created specifically for Atlantic oceanic sharks, it may be expanded to include other HMS, as needed.

The primary purpose of the individuals in the SEDAR Pool is

to review, at SEDAR workshops, the scientific information (including but not limited to data and models) used in stock assessments that are used to advise NMFS, as a delegate to the Secretary of Commerce (Secretary), about the conservation and management of the Atlantic HMS, specifically but not limited to, Atlantic sharks. Individuals in the SEDAR Pool, if selected, may participate in the various data, assessment, and review workshops during the SEDAR process of any HMS stock assessment. In order to ensure that the peer review is unbiased, individuals who participated in a data and/or assessment workshop for a particular stock assessment will not be allowed to serve as reviewers for the same stock assessment. However, these individuals may be asked to attend the review workshop to answer specific questions from the reviewers concerning the data and/or assessment workshops. Members of the SEDAR Pool may serve as members of other APs concurrent with, or following, their service on the SEDAR Pool.

Procedures and Guidelines

A. Terms of Reference

NMFS is updating the Terms of Reference for the SEDAR Pool, which were first established in 2010 with the formation of this advisory panel. The updated Terms of Reference allow invited

SEDAR Pool members to send a designee to represent them and participate in the activities of the workshop, after following specified procedures, including written notice to the Chief of the HMS Management Division. The updated Terms of Reference also extend member tenure from 3 to 5 years, to allow continued participation by interested parties. The Terms of Reference are available at

http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/advisory_panels/sedar_ap/sedar_hms_ap_terms_of_reference.pdf.

B. Participants

The SEDAR Pool is comprised of individuals representing the commercial and recreational fishing communities for Atlantic sharks, the environmental community active in the conservation and management of Atlantic sharks, and the academic community that have relevant expertise either with sharks or shark-like species and/or stock assessment methodologies for marine fish species. Members of the SEDAR Pool must have demonstrated experience in the fisheries, related industries, research, teaching, writing, conservation, or management of marine organisms. The distribution of representation among the interested parties is not defined or limited.

Additional members of the SEDAR Pool may also include

representatives from each of the five Atlantic Regional Fishery Management Councils, each of the 18 states, both the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico, and each of the interstate commissions: the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission and the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission.

If NMFS requires additional members to ensure a diverse pool of individuals for data or assessment workshops, NMFS may request individuals to become members of the SEDAR Pool outside of the annual nomination period.

Panel members serve at the discretion of the Secretary. Not all members will attend each SEDAR workshop. Rather, NMFS will invite certain members to participate at specific stock assessment workshops dependent on their ability to participate, discuss, and recommend scientific decisions regarding the species being assessed. If an invited SEDAR Pool member is unable to attend the workshop, the member may send a designee who may represent them and participate in the activities of the workshop. In order to ensure the designee meets the requirements of participating in the data and/or assessment workshop, the designee must receive written approval of the HMS Management Division Chief at least two weeks in advance of the beginning of the relevant data and/or assessment workshop.

Written notification must include the name, address, telephone, e-mail, and position of the individual designated. A designee may not name another designee.

NMFS is not obligated to fulfill any requests (e.g., requests for an assessment of a certain species) that may be made by the SEDAR Pool or its individual members. Members of the SEDAR Pool who are invited to attend stock assessment workshops will not be compensated for their services but may be reimbursed for their travel-related expenses to attend such workshops.

C. Nomination Procedures for Appointments to the SEDAR Pool

Member tenure will be for 5 years. Nominations are sought for terms beginning early in 2015 and expiring in 2020.

Nomination packages should include:

1. The name, address, phone number, and e-mail of the applicant or nominee;
2. A description of his/her interest in Atlantic shark stock assessments or the Atlantic shark fishery;
3. A statement of background and/or qualifications; and
4. A written commitment that the applicant or nominee shall participate actively and in good faith in the tasks of the SEDAR Pool, as requested.

D. Meeting Schedule

Individual members of the SEDAR Pool meet to participate in stock assessments at the discretion of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS. Stock assessment timing, frequency, and relevant species will vary depending on the needs determined by NMFS and SEDAR staff. Currently, other than meetings needed to complete the ongoing smoothhound shark stock assessment, NMFS does not anticipate holding any stock assessment meetings for other Atlantic shark species in 2015. In 2016, NMFS anticipates starting a stock assessment on Atlantic blacktip sharks. During an assessment year, meetings and meeting logistics will be determined according to the SEDAR Guidelines. All meetings are open for observation by the public.

Dated: December 8, 2014

Emily H. Menashes,
Acting Director,
Office of Sustainable Fisheries,
National Marine Fisheries Service.

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